

Lowestoft Town Council

For the attention of all Councillors

You are summoned to attend a **Town Hall Project Committee** meeting of Lowestoft Town Council, which will be held at **Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE** at **10:00 AM on Thursday 14 August 2025**.

The meeting is held in accessible premises and open to the public and press to attend.

Those attending shall be informed that the meeting may be reported on (including recording, photographing and filming). This does not apply to confidential items. Comments can also be submitting regarding any item on the agenda in advance of the meeting. Members of the public can join the meeting remotely via [Teams](#). The meeting can also be observed via [YouTube](#).

In providing any comments members of the public accept that, where they are suitable, they may be considered at the meeting and published in our minutes. Any individual submitting the comments should ensure that their name, address and contact details are included in their communication and should note that anonymous submissions will not be accepted. Members of the public accept that their name may be noted and recorded at the meeting. However, their contact details will not be noted and reported publicly.

Councillors must register relevant interests and declare them at a meeting if they have such an interest in a matter to be considered. Under the Localism Act 2011, a councillor with relevant interests in matters on the agenda cannot take part or vote on those matters, unless they have been granted a dispensation. Under the Council's Code of Conduct, a councillor must leave the meeting room if they have such an interest, unless they have been granted a dispensation. There may be other interests or matters in which councillors might be considered to be biased or predetermined in which case they will need to consider whether they should leave the room.

The Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity as part of relevant decisions.

S. L. Foote

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Sarah Foote, Acting Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
08 August 2025

Lowestoft Town Council
Town Hall Project Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
10:00 AM on Thursday 14 August 2025

AGENDA

27 Welcome

To explain the fire evacuation procedure, welcome the meeting, and remind councillors and members of the public of the right to report.

28 To receive and consider approval of apologies for absence

29 Declarations of Interests and dispensations

29.1 To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from members on items on the agenda

29.2 To consider written requests for dispensations for Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and note dispensations granted

30 To consider the draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 10 July 2025

31 Public forum

An opportunity for the public to make comments on any matters on this agenda, and to consider any advance comments from the public.

32 To receive an update report from the Project Manager, including the following:

32.1 An update on contractual matters

32.2 Any planned actions to be authorised for progression

32.3 The Risk Register

32.4 Updated Business Plan

33 Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report):

To note and consider income and expenditure

33.1 Monitoring the budget

33.2 Any payments for approval

34 To consider the feasibility of provision of a public transport service to north of the High Street

Lowestoft Town Council
Town Hall Project Committee
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DE
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35 To receive information on the feasibility of installing solar powered electric bicycle chargers at the Town Hall

36 To consider staffing requirements and budget recommendations (some aspects may be confidential)

37 Date of next meeting
Thursday 11 September 10:00

38 Items for the next agenda and close

Lowestoft Town Council

Town Hall Project Committee

Thursday 10 July 2025 at 10:00

MINUTES

Present: Sonia Barker, Nasima Begum (Chair), Wendy Brooks Andy Pearce, Bernie Rappensberger, Nick Webb and non-Councillor members Helen Johnson and Ben Porter (East Suffolk Council)

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Senior Committee and Project Clerk)

Also in attendance: Sheila Moss King (Town Hall Project Manager)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

15 Welcome

The Acting Town Clerk temporarily left the meeting 10:01

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed.

16 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Neil Coleby, with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

The Acting Town Clerk returned 10:02

17 Declarations of interests and dispensations

17.1 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registerable and non-registerable interests from members on items on the agenda – There were none.

17.2 Written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

18 The draft minutes of the meeting on 12 June 2025

Cllr Brooks proposed approval of the minutes, but had a comment regarding the confidential notes to raise during the confidential session. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the minutes of 12 June 2025; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

19 Public Forum

No advance comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

20 An update report from the Project Manager, including the following:

20.1 Contractual matters – There had been no specific new procurements in this period. The main construction project was progressing well. All the asbestos found to date had been removed from the building. The majority of the opening up works had been completed. Removal of the roof tiles had exposed significant damp and dry rot problems in timbers across most of the roof. Work to replace them would cause a delay to the project. This and the cost implication would be discussed during the confidential session. Barnes were scaling up the team working on the roof. Work on the Compass Street elevation would prevent other work taking place, due to the need for scaffolding through the building. There was a structural issue to a gable wall on the Compass Street side. The wall had been stabilised and would be rebuilt. This would not cause any significant delays to the project. The removal of pigeon guano would cost approximately £5,500, plus an additional cost to remove rubble from the roof void. The space would also need to be sprayed for mites. Some foundation works were happening and there were some service trenches to be dug. Some risk remained that further anomalies may be discovered. It was requested for spend against contingency to be included in the report in future. This would be discussed further during the finance section of the meeting.

20.2 Any planned actions to be authorised for progression – There were none.

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20.3 The Risk Register – An updated register had been provided by the Project Manager. The update was principally to increase the risk rating of delays and the impact of this was being worked on. The work on the roof would delay the project completion. The extent of the delay and cost implications would be calculated. The first operational quarter for the Town Hall would likely be starting around Christmas-time, which could be challenging in terms of footfall. Barnes had however increased the workforce for the roof and may have the opportunity to make up time elsewhere. The encapsulation of the building and temporary roof offered protection against challenging weather conditions.

20.4 Updated Business Plan – The Plan had been updated to reflect revised arrangements for the running of the café. The Project Manager and Acting Town Clerk were working on the job description for the Town Hall Manager. The rest of the Business Plan has been brought up to date and work continued on it. The Committee was aware of comments concerned that the café may impact some similar businesses in the area. The project objective had always been to do no harm to existing businesses, and to generate income and footfall for the North end of the High Street. The cafes in the area had been visited and it was considered there were gaps in the market which the Town Hall café could fill. Increased footfall to that part of the town could also be beneficial to the existing businesses.

20.5 Tenant-related matters (some aspects may be confidential) – The Heads of Terms for the rental agreement had been received. The Project Manager had shared floor plans and the lettable area information with Suffolk County Council, so the service charge could be confirmed to the tenants. The plans had been amended to provide a breakout area for the Registrars, and they had recently been given a tour of the premises. It was noted that the Mariners Street car park seemed significantly busier than it had been previously. All the car parks in the area had been assessed as part of the transport statement for the planning application, and it was understood there was capacity there and at St Peters Street for visitors. This may not still be the case. The Registrars had requested a couple of allocated spaces, and the Project Manager was looking into this. East Suffolk Council's enforcement of the parking limitations on the High Street may however make more casual, short-stay spaces available there.

21 Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report)

The report had been provided. The spend to date had been £1.77million, though this had increased slightly since the report had been produced. The full project financials and overall project budget overview had been provided in the report, and so far the project was slightly under budget and was nowhere near to using all of the contingency budget. None of the Public Works Loan had been drawn down yet and this would remain the case for as long as possible, to minimise the overlap of servicing the loan and paying rent and service charges for the Hamilton House office. If necessary, it should be possible to use other premises for meetings and officers were able to work flexibly anyway.

22 Recruitment (some aspects may be confidential):

22.1 Heritage Apprentice – Applications were now closed. The assessment day was to be held the following week.

22.2 Town Hall Manager – The role description and job specification was being finalised. It was anticipated the recruitment process would start from the middle of September. Given recruitment had been brought forward, the Finance and Governance Committee would consider the budget allocation for the additional salary. The salary range would be provided to the Finance and Governance Committee.

23 Financial planning for the year

The transition from Hamilton House to the Town Hall would need to be time mapped. Budgeting for Town Hall staff would need to be determined for the finalisation of the 2026 – 2027 budget by the end of this calendar year.

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Thursday 10 July 2025 at 10:00

24 Date of next meeting

Thursday 14 August 10:00

25 Items for the next agenda and close

An item was requested to more fully consider the feasibility of provision of a public transport service to that part of town.

It was reported that solar powered electric bicycle chargers had been installed at Carlton Marshes, and this could be considered for the Town Hall. Cllr Brooks would provide further details for consideration at the next meeting.

Referring back to item 20, the Project Manager reported that an advertisement for a freelance pop culture project facilitator had recently been published. It was likely this would be linked to the inaugural exhibition in the Town Hall. The work of five students from East Coast College was being printed to display on the hoarding surrounding the Town Hall.

Cllr Rappensberger proposed to move the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

26 Admission to meetings

18 The draft minutes of the meeting on 12 June 2025 – A consideration of the Project Manager had not been included in the confidential note of the previous meeting. The Project Manager did not however wish to amend the confidential note. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the confidential note of the meeting on 12 June 2025; seconded by Cllr Barker; all in favour.

20.1 Contractual matters – Details of the potential project delay and cost implications were discussed.

21 Finance, budget monitoring and payments (see report) – Savings in other areas of the project had reduced the amount of contingency expenditure. Budget allocations had been generous and the project was still well within the allocated contingency budget. The cost implications of the project overrunning, the potential for external funding streams and exhausting the contingency budget were discussed.

The meeting was closed at 11:05.

Signed:

16 July 2025